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24 April 1955

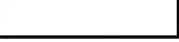


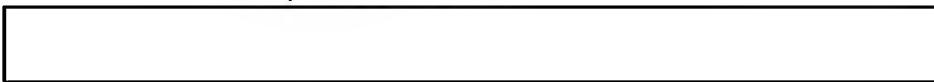
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY



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State Dept. review completed

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SOVIET UNION

1. New types of Soviet aircraft sighted over Moscow:

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In seven practice flights since 6 April for the annual May Day aerial parade, at least three new types of Soviet aircraft, as well as significant numbers of four-engine jet heavy bombers, have been observed by Western officials. New aircraft types sighted include at least one jet fighter similar in appearance to the MIG; a swept-wing, four-engine turboprop aircraft of heavy bomber size; and a jet twin-engine swept-wing aircraft, probably a light bomber.

In the sixth and largest pre-parade practice, held on the morning of 21 April, eight jet heavy bombers were flown in two V's of three, preceded by two single aircraft.

FAR EAST

2. Hatoyama government expected to survive critical Diet session:

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The Hatoyama government will have an exceptionally hard time in the Diet session due to reconvene on 25 April, with bitter attacks expected from both the Socialists and the conservative Liberals, according to the American embassy in Tokyo. The majority opinion at present, however, is that the government will survive the session, which will probably last well into June.

Focal point of the opposition attacks will be the budget, with the Socialists in particular planning to denounce the minority Democratic government for failing to implement campaign promises for increased welfare benefits and for "surrendering" to the United States by not reducing Japan's defense expenditures.

The government's diplomatic "blunders" will likewise be denounced, and there continue to be rumors that a motion of no confidence will be submitted against Foreign Minister Shigemitsu.

Comment: The recent Democratic moves for a conservative merger, to be followed by Hatoyama's retirement,

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were probably timed to serve as a conciliatory gesture toward the Liberals. Hatoyama can almost assure himself of Liberal support on the budget by threatening to call new elections.

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SOUTHEAST ASIA

3. Minh says removal of Diem will appear sect victory:

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Former Vietnamese defense minister Ho Thong Minh told American embassy officials that it may be impossible to remove Premier Diem without making such a move appear a victory for the sect front controlled by the Binh Xuyen. He urged that the change nevertheless be made, and suggested that Vietnamese political groups, the sects, the French, and the Americans suggest names of a successor, and Bao Dai would make the choice. Minh, however, expressed apprehension regarding the possible appointment of "a Tonkinese"--presumably a reference to Phan Huy Quat--as Diem's replacement.

Meanwhile, General Ely told the embassy that some change must take place in four or five days. He described Diem as "no longer the chief of the government, but merely the chief of a band."

Comment: Recent consultations with the principal Vietnamese aspirants for the premiership have revealed their inability to agree among themselves on even minimum proposals for the solution of the present crisis, beyond conceding the need for a more representative government. Minh's political ambitions have long been evident to the embassy, and his remarks appear designed to undercut his rival, Phan Huy Quat.

Since the beginning of the Diem-Binh Xuyen dispute a month ago, Ely has been insisting that a solution within a matter of days was imperative. However, he told General Collins on 19 April that he did not expect an "immediate blow-up."

The Binh Xuyen continues openly and systematically to flaunt the authority of the government, and there are reports that troops of the Vietnamese army have been encouraging incidents.

WESTERN EUROPE

4. Austria will ask four-power guarantee of neutrality status:

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Chancellor Raab told Ambassador Thompson in Vienna on 21 April that he intended to seek a four-power guarantee of Austrian neutrality, and that Moscow might insist on the powers agreeing to this before signing the treaty. Raab considers that Austria has full freedom to draft the text of its neutrality declaration as long as it follows the Swiss model.

According to Thompson, Raab clearly believes that Austrian neutrality will not go beyond avoiding military alliances and refusing to permit the stationing of foreign troops on Austrian soil. It would not bar membership in such organizations as the Coal-Steel Community.

Raab does not consider that Austria would be obliged to ship strategic material to the Soviet Union, and he asserted that Austria could maintain its right of asylum for iron curtain refugees.

Raab stated that the primary task of his government is to maintain friendship with the United States, and that he had already told German representatives in Vienna that the Federal Republic must rearm, as this is the only language Moscow understands.

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Comment: While the Western powers have been prepared to respect Austria's option for neutrality, they have been opposed to a guarantee insisting that Austria remain neutral. Moscow seems to want primarily the Austrian declaration of neutrality, which it can use immediately to stimulate West German interest in unification of a neutral Germany.

It seems probable that Austria will ship some strategic materials, which the USSR has been able to acquire in Austria in the past.

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